

## GROWTH OF THE DISTRICT

Its Development Into One of the  
World's Great Cities

**Commissioner Macfarland's Interesting and Eloquent Retrospect—The Cession of Alexandria—Realization of President Washington's Hopes Have Already Been Accomplished.**

District Commissioner Henry B. F. Macfarland delivered the second address of the Centennial Day exercises at the White House this morning, his subject being "Development of the District of Co-

"One hundred years ago the District of Columbia became the permanent seat of the Government of the United States. For the first time the young nation had a Capital, after twenty-four years of wandering from one State to another. Moved by the attack of the mob of soldiers on Congress in Philadelphia in 1783, the makers of the new Government had written in the Federal Constitution that the nation should have its own Capital, in a Federal district to be ceded to the exclusive control of Congress. It is the only provision for an independent capital ever made by any na-

tion. The then North and South had contended for the honor of providing this Federal district until threats of secession were occasionally heard, and it seemed to some that there might soon come to be no need for a National Capital. States offered cities and even capitals, and their Representatives in Congress fought over these

offers. At last, with a characteristic compromise, the fathers provided that the Federal district should be given to the South, while the North should be given its desire in the assumption by the nation of the Revolutionary Indebtedness of the States. Nothing could have been more fortunate than this decision, unless it be the determination to leave to George Washington the selection of the site for the new Capital, and the direction of its preparation.

"His own State of Virginia had offered ten miles square. The State of Maryland had done the same, and under the authority of Congress Washington had 100 miles of the Potomac, from Williamsport in Maryland to the Eastern Branch, where to

chose. Washington chose with the eye of a surveyor the best site available under the circumstances, and then laid it out with the eye of a seer. All that he saw could not come true. The Federal District could not contain "the greatest commercial emporium of the United States," as he had hoped for, because the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, which he had promoted, would, as its name suggested, with the Potomac connect the then East and West by the most practicable route to the sea. N.Y. could it contain the national

university, which was so dear to Washington's heart that he richly remembered it in his will, though it was to become a roofless university. But Washington clearly saw few other men could see. He knew that the nation would grow and expand until it became the greatest of all nations. While men were still doubting whether it would last long as a nation George Washington was planning with the assistance of Thomas Jefferson and L'Enfant and Elliott, a National Capital for all time, a city of magnificent proportions, greater and better in design than any other in the

world. No other city has ever been laid out on such a scale or in such style. Even Washington's reputation for common sense did not save it from being called a visionary scheme. For more than half a century home and foreign wits jested at it as it lay undeveloped, half village, half capital, through neglect of the General Government.

"Although it was south of Mason and Dixon's line, it was almost in the centre of the narrow Union of 1800, as it stretched along the Atlantic coast, but after the expansion of its domains begun under Washington, three years later, under Jefferson, crossed the Mississippi, suggestions of the removal of the Capital west of the Alleghenies began, and continued in what seemed an entirely natural way to the statesmen meeting in the then Washington, until railroad and telegraph, making communication so much quicker, deprived

"The Federal City, as Washington called it, the City of Washington, as the Congress inevitably called it, was Washington's prediction that the nation would live for centuries and would grow to the full need of such a capital. It is most appropriate that we begin this celebration almost under the shadow of the Washington Monument, that unique structure which practically marks the centre of the original District of Columbia, and in the President's House, which so interested Washington in the first place."

the only place in the country that has stood since 1800 that is still standing. For while Congress, in the preliminary legislation, provided only for a Federal District (though it afterward ratified the preparations for a Federal City made by Washington) the city, named for him, has always been more prominent than the district in the world's eye, and now that the name so nearly coterminous, the capital will be more and more known by its great founder's name; not, however, as Washington city, but as the City of Washington.

It is interesting to read, in the official and unofficial documents, of the part which Washington took, with his customary energy, thoroughness and patience, in all the details of the founding of the Federal District and of the Federal City. It was he, personally, who made the bargain with the nineteen original proprietors, advantageous to them, but much more so to the Government, and who finally brought even the refractory David Burns to terms. It was he personally, who directed the Commissioners and the

surveyors, as they laid out the streets and built buildings, and who mediated between them when they quarreled. It was the crowning work of his life, and perhaps nothing that he did, except the Jersey campaign that saved the Revolution, and the making of the Constitution that saved the nation, interested or pleased him more. It must have grieved him that he could not live to see the actual establishment of the National Government in the city that had been named for him. He died in December, and, under the act of Congress passed ten years

before, the National Government began its removal from Philadelphia in May. By July the six executive departments of that day were all in full working order here. By November President Adams, after a visit of inspection in June, was occupying this house, and Congress was

in session preparatory to the regular session in December. The Supreme Court having adjourned in August until February, did not meet here in 1800. But through the address of President Adams in Congress, and the responses of the Senate and the House, it was officially declared in November, that the seat of Government had been established here.

"These formal announcements and the addresses exchanged by President Adams and the citizens are full of gratitude for the fact that the National Government had at last a home of its own. Privately

